C13.20/2:71-76

Voluntary Product Standard

PS 71-76

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE/National Bureau of Standards

MARKING OF JEWELRY AND NOVELTIES OF SILVER

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AMERICAN NATIONAL STANDARD

ANSI/VPS PS 71-76

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Voluntary Product Standard
PS 71-76

Marking of Jewelry and Novelties of Silver

Approved by the American National Standards Institute on April 18, 1977, as American National Standard ANSI/VPS PS 71-76

Abstract

This Voluntary Product Standard covers the marking of jewelry and novelties of silver, as herein defined, (other than flatware, hollow-ware, and toilet ware) offered for sale in the United States of America. Requirements are given for marking of "Sterling Silver," "Silver," or "Solid Silver" and for the marking of "Coin" or "Coin Silver." Definitions of trade terms used and methods for identifying products that comply with this standard are included.

Key words: Jewelry, "Silver," marking of; novelties, "Silver", marking of; "Sterling Silver," "Silver," or "Solid Silver," marking of; "Coin" or "Coin Silver," marking of.

Nat. Bur. Stand. (U.S.), Prod. Stand. 71–76, 4 pages (Aug. 1977)
CODEN:XNPSAX

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VOLUNTARY PRODUCT STANDARDS

Voluntary Product Standards are developed under procedures published by the Department of Commerce in Part 10, Title 15, of the Code of Federal Regulations. The purpose of the standards is to establish nationally recognized requirements for products, and to provide all concerned interests with a basis for common understanding of the characteristics of the products. The National Bureau of Standards administers the *Volunatry Product Standards* program as a supplement to the activities of the private sector standardizing organizations.

Establishment of a VOLUNTARY PRODUCT STANDARD

The role of the National Bureau of Standards in the establishment of a Voluntary Product Standard is to (1) act as an unbiased coordinator in the development of the standard, (2) provide editorial assistance in the preparation of the standard, (3) supply such assistance and review as is required to assure the technical soundness of the standard, (4) seek satisfactory adjustment of valid points of disagreement, (5) determine the compliance with the criteria of the Department's procedures, (6) provide secretarial functions for each committee appointed under the Department's procedures, and (7) publish the standard as a public document.

Producers, distributors, users, consumers, and other interested groups contribute to the establishment of a *Voluntary Product Standard* by (1) initiating and participating in the development of the standard, (2) providing technical or other related counsel as appropriate relating to the standard, (3) promoting the use of and support for the standard, and (4) assisting in keeping the standard current with respect to advancing technology and marketing practices.

Use of a VOLUNTARY PRODUCT STANDARD

The use of a *Voluntary Product Standard* is voluntary; the National Bureau of Standards has no regulatory power in the enforcement of the provisions of the standards. However, since the standards represent a consensus of all interested groups, their provisions are likely to become established as trade customs. In addition, when a standard is made a part of a legal document, such as a sales contract or code, compliance with the standard is enforceable.

The benefits derived from *Voluntary Product Standards* are in direct proportion to their general recognition and actual use. Producers and distributors whose products meet the requirements of a *Voluntary Product Standard* may refer to the standard in advertising and on labels to promote greater public understanding of or confidence in their products. Purchasers may order products conforming to the requirements of the standards.

For copies of the *Voluntary Product Standards* procedures or for more information concerning the development and use of these standards you may write to: Standards Development Services Section, National Bureau of Standards, Washington, D.C. 20234.

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Voluntary Product Standard PS 71-76
Supersedes Commercial Standard CS 118-44

Marking of Jewelry and Novelties of Silver

Effective April 12, 1976 (See section 5.)

(This Standard, which was initiated by the Jewelers Vigilance Committee, has been developed under the *Procedures for the Development of Voluntary Product Standards* of the U.S. Department of Commerce as a revalidation of CS 118–44, *Marking of Jewelry and Novelties of Silver*. See Section 6, *History of Project*, for further information.)

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Voluntary Product Standard is to establish nationally recognized marking requirements for jewelry and novelties made of silver and to provide producers, distributors, and users with a basis for common understanding of the characteristics of this product.

2. SCOPE

This Voluntary Product Standard covers the marking of jewelry and novelties of silver, as herein defined, (other than flatware, hollow-ware, and toilet ware) offered for sale in the United States of America. Definitions of trade terms used and methods for identifying products that comply with this Standard are included.

3. REQUIREMENTS

3.1. General—Products represented as complying with this Voluntary Product Standard shall meet all of the requirements specified herein.

3.2. Application of quality marks—No article shall be marked "Sterling," "Sterling Silver," "Silver," or "Solid Silver" unless 925/1000 parts of the metal, purporting to be or having the appearance of silver, of which such article is manufactured, is pure silver.

3.3. Coin—No article shall be marked "Coin" or "Coin Silver" unless 900/1000 parts of the metal, purporting to be or having the appearance of silver, of which such article is manufactured, is pure silver.

3.4. Requirements—No quality marks shall be used on any article covered by this standard other than those herein specified.

3.5. Abbreviation—The terms "Sterling" and "Coin" shall not be abbreviated, and neither term shall be applied in any manner to a silver-plated article.

3.6. Tolerance—The tolerances for fineness shall be those provided by the National Gold and Silver Stamping Act of 1906[1] or any amendment thereof.

3.7. Exemptions—The only exemptions recognized and not to be included in any assay for quality include screws, rivets, springs, spring pins for wristwatch straps; posts and separable backs of lapel buttons; pin posts, clutches of insignia, wire pegs, posts and nuts used for applying mountings or other ornaments, which mountings or ornaments shall be of the quality marked; pin stems of badges, brooches, emblem pins, hatpins, and scarf pins; levers for belt buckles; and blades and skeletons of pocket knives.

3.8. Trademark—Any article herein defined having applied thereto a quality mark, shall also have applied thereto and immediately adjacent to such quality mark, and equally visible, legible, clear, and distinct therewith, the name or a trademark duly applied for or registered under the laws of the United States, of the manufacturer or seller of such articles or the trade name of the manufacturer or seller. Initials shall not be used in place of a name unless registered as a trademark, as above provided.

3.9. Class, pattern, type or style mark—If an article herein defined has applied to it the name or a trademark duly applied for or registered under the laws of the United States of the manufacturer or seller of such article, and a quality mark conforming to the requirements

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[1] This Act provides that "There shall be allowed a divergence in the fineness of 4 one-thousandths parts" where the article or part of the article taken for test contains no solder. The Act also provides for an additional test where solder is used—that "The actual fineness of the entire quantity of silver or of its alloys contained in such article, including all solder and alloys of interior fineness used for brazing or uniting the parts of such article (all such silver alloys and solder being assayed as one piece) shall not be less by more than 10 one-thousandths parts than the fineness indicated by the mark * * *."
For full text see 15 U.S.C. 294 et seq.

of this standard, it may also have applied to it numerals or other indication to identify the class, pattern, type or style of the article, provided such numerals are not incorporated with the quality marks and are not placed so as to mislead or deceive.

4. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Standard, the following definitions shall apply:

Apply or Applied—Apply or applied includes any method or means of application or attachment to, or of use on, or in conjunction with, or in relation to an article, whether such application, attachment, or use is to, on, by, in, or with (1) the article itself, (2) anything attached to the article, (3) anything to which the article is attached, (4) anything in, or on, which the article is, or (5) any bill, invoice, order, statement, letter, advertisement, or anything so used or placed as to lead to a reasonable belief that it refers to the article in question.

Sterling, Sterling Silver, Silver or Solid Silver—Sterling, sterling silver, silver or solid silver means an alloy of silver containing 925/1000 or more parts of pure silver.

Coin or Coin Silver—Coin or coin silver means an alloy of silver containing 900/1000 parts of pure silver.

Mark—Mark means any letter, figure, number symbol, sign or device, or any combinations thereof.

Quality mark—Quality mark means any mark, as herein defined, indicating or purporting to indicate that an article is composed of silver, or the quality, fineness, or kind of silver in an article.

5. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IDENTIFICATION

The effective date of this Standard is April 12, 1976. As of the effective date, reference to PS 71–76, may be made in contracts, codes, advertising, invoices, product labels, and the like, but no product may be advertised or represented in any manner which would imply or tend to imply approval or endorsement of that product by the National Bureau of Standards, the Department of Commerce, or by the Federal Government.

The following statements are suggested for use in representing products as conforming to all requirements of this Standard:

(1) "This article conforms to all requirements established in Voluntary Product Standard PS 71–76, developed and published in accordance with the U.S. Department of Commerce *Procedures for the Development of Voluntary Product Standards.* Full responsibility for the conformance of this product to the standard is assumed by (name and address of producer or distributor)."

(2) "Conforms to PS 71–76, (name and address of producer or distributor)."

6. HISTORY OF PROJECT

In 1941 Commercial Standard CS 118–44, *Marking of Jewelry and Novelties of Silver*, was developed at the request of the New England Manufacturing Jewelers' and Silversmiths' Association (renamed Manufacturing Jewelers and Silversmiths Association, Inc.), supported by the Jewelers Vigilance Committee, Inc., and was published in August 1944.

In December 1974 the Jewelers Vigilance Committee, Inc., the recognized trade association for the jewelry industry, requested that the National Bureau of Standards initiate a revalidation of CS 118–44 under the *Procedures for the Development of Voluntary Product Standards.* Appointments were made to the Standing Committee, and the Jewelers Vigilance Committee, Inc., recommendation was forwarded to them in July 1975 for review. The Standing Committee indicated the standard should be revalidated and in December 1975 they were asked to vote on the appropriateness of the proposal. In February 1976 all members of the Standing Committee approved the proposal to revalidate CS 118–44.

The new edition of the standard was designated Voluntary Product Standard PS 71–76, *Marking of Jewelry and Novelties of Silver*, and became effective on April 12, 1976.

Technical Standards Coordinator:

C. W. Devereux
Standards Development Services Section
National Bureau of Standards
Washington, D.C. 20234

7. STANDING COMMITTEE

A Standing Committee has been appointed to assist in keeping this Voluntary Product Standard up to date. The names of the members of the committee are available from the Standards Development Services Section, Washington, D.C. 20234, which serves as the secretariat of the committee.

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